

Louisiana Wild Seafood Certification Program Overview

Background Information:

The most significant recommendation approved by the Louisiana Shrimp Task Force was endorsing the development of a VOLUNTARY shrimp certification program.

The Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is charged to oversee the development and implementation of the Louisiana Wild Seafood Certification Program, in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Department of Health and Hospitals, Louisiana State University, Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board and any others deemed appropriate. This program is truly a collaborative effort of state agencies.

Voluntary Certification Program

- **Quality Assurance** – This will address Food Safety Practices and the quality of products. Industry leaders, university scientists and state biologists will develop seafood standards.
- **Traceability** – The ability to trace a product from water to plate. This will also allow assurance of proper temperature control.
- **Inspection/Monitoring** – This will ensure compliance and accountability of the product and the program.
- **Professionalism** – Training seafood industry methods of producing and monitoring the quality and safety of Louisiana Seafood.
- **Branding and Marketing** – Will give the ability to promote and offer a quality, certified, branded product.
- **Sustainability** – Managing Louisiana fisheries in a way that provides for today's needs without damaging the ability of the species to reproduce and be available for future generations.

Program components:

- **Harvest Requirements**
- **Post-harvest refrigeration requirements**
- **Quality Standards**
- **Handling Practices**
- **Traceability**
- **Branding/Branding Registration**
- **Record Requirements**
- **Compliance Standards**
- **Packaging Regulations**

The development and implementation of the Louisiana Wild Seafood Certification Program will help the Louisiana seafood create a more professional industry, better handling practices and a more consistent, quality product. In turn, this program will increase consumer confidence and enable harvesters to receive a premium price for their catch.

This voluntary program will ensure Louisiana's shrimp industry is able to compete and endure in the constantly changing global market place.